

Report Identification Number: NY-16-053 Prepared by: New York City Regional Office

Issue Date: 12/16/2016

This	s report, prepared pursuant to section 20(5) of the Social Services Law (SSL), concerns:
X	A report made to the New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) involving the death of a child.
	The death of a child for whom child protective services has an open case.
	The death of a child whose care and custody or custody and guardianship has been transferred to an authorized agency.
	The death of a child for whom the local department of social services has an open preventive service case.

The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) is mandated by section 20 of the SSL to investigate or cause for the investigation of the cause and circumstances surrounding the death, review such investigation, and prepare and issue a fatality report in regard to the categories of deaths noted above involving a child, except where a local or regional fatality review team issues a report, as authorized by law.

Such report must include: the cause of death; the identification of child protective or other services provided or actions taken regard to such child and child's family; any extraordinary or pertinent information concerning the circumstances of the child's death; whether the child or the child's family received assistance, care or services from the social services district prior to the child's death; any action or further investigation undertaken by OCFS or the social services district since the child's death; and as appropriate, recommendations for local or state administrative or policy changes.

This report contains no information that would identify the deceased child, his or her siblings, the parent, parents, or other persons legally responsible for the child, and any members of the deceased child's household.

By statute, this report will be forwarded to the social services district, chief county executive officer, chairperson of the local legislative body of the county where the child died and the social services district that had legal custody of the child, if different. Notice of the issuance of this report will be sent to the Speaker of the Assembly and the Temporary President of the Senate of the State of New York.

This report may <u>only</u> be disclosed to the public by OCFS pursuant to section 20(5) of the SSL. It may be released by OCFS only after OCFS has determined that such disclosure is not contrary to the best interests of the deceased child's siblings or other children in the household.

OCFS' review included an examination of actions taken by individual caseworkers and supervisors within the social services district and agencies under contract with the social services district. The observations and recommendations contained in this report reflect OCFS' assessment and the performance of these agencies.

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## **Abbreviations**

Relationships						
BM-Biological Mother	SM-Subject Mother	SC-Subject Child				
BF-Biological Father	SF-Subject Father	OC-Other Child				
MGM-Maternal Grand Mother	MGF-Maternal Grand Father	FF-Foster Father				
PGM-Paternal Grand Mother	PGF-Paternal Grand Father	DCP-Day Care Provider				
MGGM-Maternal Great Grand Mother	MGGF-Maternal Great Grand Father	PGGF-Paternal Great Grand Father				
PGGM-Paternal Great Grand Mother	MA/MU-Maternal Aunt/Maternal Uncle	PA/PU-Paternal Aunt/Paternal Uncle				
FM-Foster Mother	SS-Surviving Sibling					

	Contacts	
LE-Law Enforcement	CW-Case Worker	CP-Case Planner
DrDoctor	ME-Medical Examiner	EMS-Emergency Medical Services
DC-Day Care	FD-Fire Department	BM-Biological Mother
CPR-Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation		
	Allegations	
FX-Fractures	II-Internal Injuries	L/B/W-Lacerations/Bruises/Welts
S/D/S-Swelling/Dislocation/Sprains	C/T/S-Choking/Twisting/Shaking	B/S-Burns/Scalding
P/Nx-Poisoning/ Noxious Substance	XCP-Excessive Corporal Punishment	PD/AM-Parent's Drug Alcohol Misuse
CD/A-Child's Drug/Alcohol Use	LMC-Lack of Medical Care	EdN-Educational Neglect
EN-Emotional Neglect	SA-Sexual Abuse	M/FTTH-Malnutrition/Failure-to-thrive
IF/C/S-Inadequate Food/ Clothing/ Shelter	IG-Inadequate Guardianship	LS-Lack of Supervision
Ab-Abandonment	OTH/COI-Others	
	Miscellaneous	
IND-Indicated	UNF-Unfounded	SO-Sexual Offender
Sub-Substantiated	Unsub-Unsubstantiated	DV-Domestic Violence
LDSS-Local Department of Social	ACS-Administration for Children's	NYPD-New York City Police
Service	Services	Department
PPRS-Purchased Preventive Rehabilitative Services	TANF-Temporary Assistance to Needy Families	FC-Foster Care
MH-Mental Health	ER-Emergency Room	

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### **Case Information**

**Report Type:** Child Deceased **Jurisdiction:** Kings **Date of Death:** 05/24/2016

Age: 5 month(s) Gender: Male Initial Date OCFS Notified: 05/24/2016

#### **Presenting Information**

On 5/24/16, the BF placed the five-month-old infant on his side, in his crib. The BF returned a couple of hours later to check the infant and found him unresponsive. EMS responded to the home and found the infant unresponsive. The infant was an otherwise healthy child. The allegations were DOA/ Fatality and IG of the infant by the parents.

Later, on 5/24/16, the SCR registered a second report with similar information and the allegations were the same; however, the allegations were against the BF only.

### **Executive Summary**

Following the receipt of the reports, ACS initiated the investigation and confirmed the reports. ACS contacted and received information from appropriate collaterals such as the ME, LE, DR and family members. It was revealed that there were two male surviving siblings, ages nine and five-years-old, who resided in the home. The BM was at work during the time of the incident.

LE responded to the home, observed the SC on the table and assisted the BF with administering CPR to the SC as instructed by the 911 operator. At approximately 1:00 P.M., EMS arrived and when they picked up the SC, he spit up formula. He was then transported to Woodhull Hospital where the attending ER physician pronounced him dead at 1:48 P.M.

On 5/25/16, the ME conducted an autopsy and reported the SC had no physical signs of abuse or neglect. LE found no criminality and closed their case.

The BF reported that the BM and the surviving children left the home after 7:00 A.M. on the morning of 5/24/16. The SC napped until about 7:30 when he awoke. The BF said he played with the SC and he was fine. The BF stated that between 10:30 AM and 11:00 A.M., the SC drank four to five ounces of formula and fell asleep in his arms. At 12:00 P.M. the BF placed the SC on his left side, in his crib. At approximately 12:50 P.M., he checked to find the SC had moved a little; however, he was still on his side. The BF picked up the SC and milk excreted from his mouth but he was not breathing. The BF contacted the BM, who was at work, and she advised to contact 911. The BM reported that the night prior to the incident, the SC had coughed a few times and spit up a little mucus. He spent the night with her as he was not sleeping; however, he eventually fell asleep and awoke at 6:00 A.M. She fed him and he was laughing and appeared fine. She left him in his father's care and went to work. She has no concerns of the care the BF provided.

The parents denied substance abuse, DV or mental illness. ACS later received the BF's drug screening tests results that were negative. The BF reported he has two daughters ages five and three that reside with their mother in another county. He is no longer involved with those children. ACS requested a courtesy visit which documented the children were safe.

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The Specialist observed the pack and play where the SC slept, it was located in the parent's bedroom. It contained a baby size cotton sheet and a baby size fleece blanket. The BM received safe sleep training at the hospital and they adhered to the training. According to the parents, the SC was healthy, active, always slept in the crib and was able to turn over.

The MGM told the Specialist that she has a good relationship with the BF and she spends time with the children every two weeks. She has no concerns for the care the parents provide. The neighbor reported the parents are very good to the children and they have never observed the parents engage in DV. The parents declined services for all family members.

The children's Dr. reported the SC was born full term, he had no health conditions and his immunizations were up to date. The SS's immunizations were also up to date.

As of 12/16/16, ACS has not made a determination on the case.

### Findings Related to the CPS Investigation of the Fatality

#### **Safety Assessment:**

Was sufficient information gathered to make the decision recorded on the:

> Approved Initial Safety Assessment? Yes

> • Safety assessment due at the time of determination? Yes

Was the safety decision on the approved Initial Safety Assessment Yes appropriate?

#### **Determination:**

Was sufficient information gathered to make determination(s) for all allegations as well as any others identified in the course of the investigation?

The CPS report had not yet been determined at the time this Fatality report was issued.

Was the determination made by the district to unfound or indicate N/A appropriate?

### **Explain:**

ACS did not complete a safety assessment due at the time of the determination.

Unknown Was the decision to close the case appropriate?

Was casework activity commensurate with appropriate and relevant Unable to Determine

statutory or regulatory requirements?

Was there sufficient documentation of supervisory consultation? Yes, the case record has detail of the

consultation

### **Explain:**

ACS has not made a determination to date.

### **Required Actions Related to the Fatality**

Are there Required Actions related to the compliance issue(s)?  $\boxtimes$ Yes  $\square$ No

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Issue:	Timely/Adequate 24 Hour Assessment
Summary:	Although ACS visited the SS within the initial 24-hours, a safety assessment was not completed within the required timeframe.
Legal Reference:	SSL 424(6);18 NYCRR 432.2(b)(3)(i)
Action:	ACS must submit a corrective action plan within 45 days that identifies what action it has taken or will take to address the issues cited in this report. ACS staff must meet with staff involved with this fatality investigation and NYCRO of the date of the meeting, who attended, and what was discussed.
Issue:	Timeliness of Determination
Summary:	ACS has not made a determination to date.
Legal Reference:	SSL 424(7);18 NYCRR 432.2(b)(3)(iv)
Action:	ACS must submit a corrective action plan within 45 days that identifies what action it has taken or will take to address the issues cited in this report. ACS staff must meet with staff involved with this fatality investigation and NYCRO of the date of the meeting, who attended, and what was discussed.

### **Fatality-Related Information and Investigative Activities**

Incident Information

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<b>Date of Death:</b> 05/24/2016		Time of Death: 01:48
Time of fatal incident, if dif	fferent than time of death:	12:50 PM
County where fatality incid	lent occurred:	KINGS
Was 911 or local emergency	y number called?	Yes
Time of Call:		12:58 PM
Did EMS to respond to the	scene?	Yes
At time of incident leading	to death, had child used ale	cohol or drugs? No
Child's activity at time of ir	icident:	
⊠ Sleeping	☐ Working	☐ Driving / Vehicle occupant
☐ Playing	☐ Eating	□ Unknown
☐ Other	C	
Did child have supervision	at time of incident leading	to death? Yes
How long before incident w	as the child last seen by	

Total number of deaths at incident event:

At time of incident supervisor was: Not

Is the caretaker listed in the Household Composition? Yes - Caregiver 1

caretaker? 50 Minutes

impaired.



### Children ages 0-18: 1

### **Household Composition at time of Fatality**

Household	Relationship	Role	Gender	Age
Deceased Child's Household	Deceased Child	Alleged Victim	Male	5 Month(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Father	Alleged Perpetrator	Male	29 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Mother	Alleged Perpetrator	Female	29 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Male	9 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Male	5 Year(s)

### **LDSS Response**

Following the receipt of the SCR report, the ACS Specialist visited Woodhull Hospital on 5/24/16 and obtained information from the appropriate collaterals which included the Dr, LE, EMS, ME, and family members.

The Dr confirmed the reported information and added that the SC arrived at the ER unresponsive and was pronounced dead at 1:48 P.M. on 5/24/16. The DR. found no signs of physical abuse or maltreatment.

EMS reported the technicians arrived at the case address and when they picked up the SC, formula seeped from his mouth as they attempted to resuscitate him. They transported the SC to Woodhull Hospital at approximately 1:15 P.M. LE conducted an investigation in the home and interviewed the parents; LE assessed there was no criminality associated with the death of the infant. On 5/25/16, the ME conducted an autopsy and reported the SC had no signs of abuse or neglect.

ACS interviewed the BF and he reported that the BM and the two surviving siblings (SS) left the home after 7:00 A.M. on the morning of 5/24/16. The SC slept until about 7:30 AM and when the SC awoke, he (the BF) played with the SC. The BF said the SC was fine. The BF stated that between 10:30 and 11:00 A.M., the SC drank four to five ounces of formula and fell asleep in his arms. At 12:00 P.M. the BF placed the SC on his left side, in his crib. At approximately 12:50 P.M., he checked to find the SC had moved a little; however, he was still on his side. The BF said he picked up the SC and the SC was not breathing. The BF contacted the BM, who was at work, and she advised him to contact 911. The Specialist visited the case address and documented the siblings were safe; they remained in the care of their parents. The BF reported he had two daughters, ages three and five years old, who reside with their mother in another county; he was not involved in their care. ACS documented on 6/24/16 that those siblings are also safe.

ACS' case documentation reflected the BM's account was consistent with that of the BF. Both parents denied drug or alcohol abuse, DV or mental illness. The BF denied alcohol or drug use on the day the incident occurred. ACS later obtained test results from the BF's drug screen and they were negative. The parents reported the SC was a healthy infant, active, always twisting and turning with no problems. The SC did not like to sleep on his back; however, he was able to turnover. The parents reported that the five-year-old SS asks for the SC whenever he passes by the crib. The parents reported they have family support. The nine-year-old SS receives services in school to address a learning disability.

The family members and neighbors had no concerns regarding the care the parents provided to the children.

ACS received information from the children's pediatrician, who reported their immunizations were current and the SC was

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not being treated for any health conditions. Initially, the parents agreed that the children would benefit from engaging in therapy; however, as of 10/17/16, the parents reported the services were not warranted.

As of 12/16/16, ACS has not made a determination on the case to date. The final autopsy is pending.

### Official Manner and Cause of Death

Official Manner: Pending

Primary Cause of Death: Unknown

Person Declaring Official Manner and Cause of Death: Medical Examiner

### Multidisciplinary Investigation/Review

Was the fatality investigation conducted by a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)?No

**Comments:** There is no approved OCFS Child Fatality Review in the New York City region.

Was the fatality reviewed by an OCFS approved Child Fatality Review Team? No

**Comments:** There is no OCFS approved Child Fatality Review Team in the NYC region.

#### **SCR Fatality Report Summary**

Alleged Victim(s)	Alleged Perpetrator(s)	Allegation(s)	Allegation Outcome
032521 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Mons	032522 - Father, Male, 29 Year(s)	DOA / Fatality	Pending
032521 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Mons	032522 - Father, Male, 29 Year(s)	Inadequate Guardianship	Pending
032521 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Mons	032523 - Mother, Female, 29 Year(s)	DOA / Fatality	Pending
032521 - Deceased Child, Male, 5 Mons	032523 - Mother, Female, 29 Year(s)	Inadequate Guardianship	Pending

### **CPS Fatality Casework/Investigative Activities**

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
All children observed?	$\boxtimes$			
When appropriate, children were interviewed?	×			
Alleged subject(s) interviewed face-to-face?	×			
All 'other persons named' interviewed face-to-face?	×			

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Contact with source?	×		
All appropriate Collaterals contacted?	×		
Was a death-scene investigation performed?	×		
Was there discussion with all parties (youth, other household members, and staff) who were present that day (if nonverbal, observation and comments in case notes)?	X		_
Coordination of investigation with law enforcement?	×		_
Did the investigation adhere to established protocols for a joint investigation?	×		
Was there timely entry of progress notes and other required documentation?	X		

#### **Additional information:**

The ACS investigation adhered to previously approved protocols for joint investigation.

### **Fatality Safety Assessment Activities**

	Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Were there any surviving siblings or other children in the household?	×			
Was there an adequate safety assessment of impending or immediate d in the household named in the report:	langer to su	ırviving sib	lings/other	children
Within 24 hours?		×		
At 7 days?	×			
At 30 days?		X		
Was there an approved Initial Safety Assessment for all surviving siblings/ other children in the household within 24 hours?		×		
Are there any safety issues that need to be referred back to the local district?		X		
		T	Γ	T
When safety factors were present that placed the surviving siblings/other children in the household in impending or immediate danger of serious harm, were the safety interventions, including parent/caretaker actions adequate?			⊠	
Evalaine				

#### Expiain:

According to ACS case documentation, the SS were assessed at the case address on 5/24/16, the day of the fatal incident; however, the safety assessment was not completed within the required timeframe.

### Fatality Risk Assessment / Risk Assessment Profile

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				Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Was the risk assessment/RAP adeq	uate in this	case?				×	
During the course of the investigation, was sufficient information gathered to assess risk to all surviving siblings/other children in the household?			×				
Was there an adequate assessment of the family's need for services?							
Did the protective factors in this ca petition in Family Court at any tim investigation?			o file a		×		
Were appropriate/needed services of	offered in t	his case		×			
					•		•
Place	ment Activit	ies in Respor	se to the Fat	ality Investig	gation		
							I
				Yes	No	N/A	Unable to Determine
Did the safety factors in the case show the need for the surviving siblings/other children in the household be removed or placed in foster care at any time during this fatality investigation?				×			
Were there surviving siblings/other children in the household removed as a result of this fatality report/investigation?					×		
Explain as necessary: N/A							
	Legal	Activity Rela	ated to the Fa	atality			
Was there legal activity as a result o	of the fatali	ty investiga	tion? There	was no leg	al activity.		
Serv	vices Provide	d to the Fam	ily in Respon	se to the Fat	ality		
Services	Provided After Death	Offered, but Refused	Offered, Unknown if Used	Needed but not Offered	Needed but Unavaliable	N/A	CDR Lead to Referral
Bereavement counseling		X					
Economic support						X	
Funeral arrangements						X	
Housing assistance						X	

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Mental health services						$\boxtimes$	
Foster care						×	
Health care						×	
Legal services						×	
Family planning						×	
Homemaking Services						×	
Parenting Skills						×	
Domestic Violence Services						×	
Early Intervention						×	
Alcohol/Substance abuse						×	
Child Care						×	
Intensive case management						×	
Family or others as safety resources	×						
Other						×	
Additional information, if necessary: The parents declined services for the family.							

### **Explain:**

Initially, the parents agreed that the children would benefit from engaging in therapy; however, as of 10/17/16, the parents reported the services were not warranted.

Were services provided to parent(s) and other care givers to address any immediate needs related to the fatality? No

### Explain:

The parents declined all services.

### **History Prior to the Fatality**

Child Information	
Did the child have a history of alleged child abuse/maltreatment?	No
Was there an open CPS case with this child at the time of death?	No
Was the child ever placed outside of the home prior to the death?	No
Were there any siblings ever placed outside of the home prior to this child's death?	No
Was the child acutely ill during the two weeks before death?	No

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Infants Under One Year Old		
During prognancy, mothers		
During pregnancy, mother:  ☐ Had medical complications / infections	☐ Had heavy alcohol use	
☐ Misused over-the-counter or prescription drugs	☐ Smoked tobacco	
	☐ Used illicit drugs	
<ul><li>☐ Experienced domestic violence</li><li>☑ Was not noted in the case record to have any of the issues listed</li></ul>	□ Osed fillen drugs	
was not noted in the case record to have any of the issues listed		
Infant was born:		
☐ Drug exposed	☐ With fetal alcohol effects or syndrome	
☑ With neither of the issues listed noted in case record	, and the second	
CPS - Investigative History Three Yea	ars Prior to the Fatality	
There is no CPS investigative history in NYS within three years prior	to the fatality	
There is no CF3 investigative history in N F3 within three years prior	to the fatanty.	
CPS - Investigative History More Than Three	e Years Prior to the Fatality	
This history pertains to the BF of the deceased child who resided in ar	nother household with his seven-week-old daughter	
and her mother. On 12/31/10, the SCR registered a report with allegat		
The infant was found with fractured ribs. On 2/23/11, ACS unfounded		
allegations against the mother based on her admission to squeezing the	e infant out of frustration.	
Known CPS History Outsid	le of NYS	
-		
There was no known CPS history outside of NYS.		
Required Action(s)		
Are there Required Actions related to compliance issues for provi	isions of CPS or Preventive services?	
□Yes ⊠No		
Preventive Services His	story	
There is no record of Preventive Services History provided to the deceased child, the deceased child's siblings, and/or the		
other children residing in the deceased child's household at the time o	if the fatality.	
Legal History Within Three Years P	rior to the Fatality	
	•	

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Was there any legal activity within three years prior to the fatality investigation? There was no legal activity



Additional Local District Comments		
N/A		
Recommended Action(s)		
Are there any recommended actions for local or state administrative or policy changes? □Yes ⊠No		
Are there any recommended prevention activities resulting from the review? □Yes ⊠No		